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The Case of Russian Labor Against Bolshevism

(Facts and Documents)

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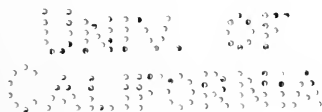
Russian Information Bureau in the U. S.

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Introduction

The Russian situation at this moment may be summed up as follows: While the Bolsheviki are still able to control, through armed force, a part of Central Russia, the people of Russia, led by the greatest Russian liberal and revolutionary leaders, are waging an open war against the Bolshevik usurpers. When we speak about the people of Russia we have in mind, as far as social classes are concerned, not only the Russian middle class, but also, and especially, the Russian peasantry and workmen who are constantly rising against the Bolshevik tyranny.

As far as the Russian political parties are concerned, not only the liberals, the Constitutional-Democratic Party, but also the People's Socialists, the Social-Democrats Mensheviki and the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists are engaged in open war with the Bolshevik usurpers and will not cease this war until political liberties and democratic institutions are reestablished in the country. The people of Russia, guided by such leaders as Catherine Breshkovsky and Nicholas Tchaikovsky, will not cease their efforts to break the new tyranny and to bring about, through an All-Russian Constituent Assembly, the rule of democracy in Russia.

As Catherine Breshkovsky The "Grandmother of the Russian Revolution," said in her wonderful "Message to the American People," "The demand for a Constituent Assembly was one of the main aspirations of the Russian Revolution. It was on the eve of its realization when the Bolshevik revolt, in November, 1917, tore out of the hands of the people the beautiful possibility to make laws for themselves, to trace the path for their future, to construct a new life in accordance with the interests of the masses, to strengthen peace and insure the common welfare."

The Constituent Assembly, which convened in Petrograd in January, 1918, was elected by the entire Russian people on the basis of universal, direct, equal and secret suffrage, with women and soldiers participating in the voting. The elections took place after the Bolsheviki had come into power, but, in spite of the fact that these elections took place during the honeymoon of the Bolshevik rule, when their promise of an immediate, general and democratic peace had not yet resulted in a shameful, separate peace with the German militarists, and the promise of bread had not yet resulted in a general starvation, Russia as a nation repu-

dictated the Bolshevik rule and the majority in the Constituent Assembly was held by the Socialists-Revolutionists. The results are well known. The Bolsheviks dispersed the parliament of the Russian people with bayonets.

Since then Russia is not free. A great part of our country is ruled by a group of usurpers who camouflage their terrorism and tyranny by democratic phraseology. In the name of the "proletariat" they have suppressed not only the Liberal, but also the entire Socialist press. In the name of the "working people" they have filled up the prisons with workingmen and peasants and have proclaimed "enemies of the people" not only the Constitutional-Democratic Party, but also the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists and the Social-Democrats Mensheviks, that is, the parties of the Russian peasantry and proletariat.

The Bolsheviks came into power by violence and they have sustained themselves in power by violence and terrorism. Their main support, the so-called Red Army, are well paid and well fed while thousands are daily dying from starvation in the cities and towns of Russia. "Flooded with tears and blood, Russia moans and cries out to the world," says Catherine Breshkovsky. "She is a living body, and her tortures cannot be looked upon cold-bloodedly as an extraordinary, never-before-witnessed experiment in social evolution. She is alive, and every pore of her body is shedding blood."

Every pore of her body is shedding blood. She is struggling for her existence and freedom. Those who struggle for democracy in Russia will defend her against the red reaction of Bolshevism as well as against the possible black reaction of Tzarism. The Russian democrats struggling against Bolshevism stand for the establishment in Russia of a government of the people, by the people and for the people. Here, as in almost everything else, the present generation of Russia agrees with the dear "Grandmother," who says: "Our greatest, deepest, most immediate need is the creation of conditions under which the Russian people will be able to convoke an All-Russian Constituent Assembly. Russia will never be quiet and satisfied until her representatives, freely chosen by the entire population, will establish a Constitution for the State, will lay the foundation for a stable, democratic government, insuring laws that accord with the will and desires of the Russian people."

A. J. SACK,

*Director of the Russian Information
Bureau in the U. S.*

June 10, 1919.

1.—The Arrest of the Labor Conference

The economic and financial policy of Bolshevism has resulted in a crushing fiasco, and the agonies of starvation, instead of the promised paradise, have turned the Russian workingmen and peasants against the Bolshevik regime. The following appeal, issued by the Workingmen's Delegates arrested by the Bolsheviks and kept in the Tagansky Prison in Moscow, fully reflects the sentiment of the masses of the Russian proletariat since the spring of 1918:

"We, the members of the Labor Conference, representing independent working-class organizations of various towns of Russia (Petrograd, Moscow, Tula, Sormovo, Kolomna, Kulebaki, Tver, Nizhni-Novgorod, Vologda, Orel, Votkinski Savod), having been arrested at our second meeting, on the 23rd of July, 1918, in 'Cooperation Hall,' feel it our public duty to protest before all citizens of Russia against the false and calumnious reports published by the Bolshevik Government press on July 27 and 28. The Bolshevik government takes advantage of the fact that it has muzzled the whole independent press and that we, members of the Labor Conference, are locked up in prison under incredible conditions.

Our conference was not 'a secret counter-revolutionary plot organized by well-to-do people and intellectuals,' etc., but a public conference of delegates of working-class organizations, which was beforehand known to and discussed by the whole press, including that of the Bolsheviks.

The delegates were sent to the Conference not by 'Menshevik or Social-Revolutionary groups,' as falsely stated in the *Izvestia*,* which desires to deceive workmen who have not yet deserted the government, but by assemblies of delegates from works and factories having tens of thousands of electors behind them. The adopted **general basis of representation** was one delegate for 5,000 workmen. The *Izvestia* goes so far as to state shamelessly that

* An official Bolshevik publication.

the delegates, Polikarpoff and Pushkin, sent by the Tula workmen, were elected by 60 to 160 men, whereas they were sent by the Tula assembly, which consisted of delegates elected by the majority of Tula workmen. At places where independent workmen's organizations could not yet be set up, delegates to the Conference were sent by individual big factories.

Having calumniously described the delegates as impostors who represent nobody, the *Izvestia*—with the insolence characteristic of the organs of the Tzarist regime—did not stop at giving false information about things found on the arrested delegates in order to cast a shadow on their characters. Thus, it is reported that Comrade Berg was found to be in possession of 6,000 roubles. As a matter of fact he had only 590 roubles. Comrade Leikin is stated to have had 160 roubles, and he had in fact 1 rouble 65 kopeck. The *Izvestia* further states that on Leikin the following things were found: a ring, diamonds and a gold watch, whereas all his 'jewelry' consisted of an ordinary gun-metal watch, which it did not occur even to the prison warders to take away.

The Bolshevik government has to resort to stupid, shameless lies to justify the preposterous arrests of the workmen's delegates who dared to show some independent organizing initiative.

The Conference of workmen's delegates was convened to make arrangements for the convocation of an All-Russian Labor Congress, and had held two meetings. The agenda of the Conference included the following items: measures against the disintegration of the working-class movement; what can be done to effect a concentration of its forces and its proper organization; arrangements for the All-Russian Labor Congress. But the Communist Government, just as its Tzarist predecessors, does not tolerate any symptoms of an independent working-class movement which constitutes a menace to its power. In this movement they see a reflection of the food crisis, and, incapable of solving the State problems which they have before them, they resort to repressive measures directed against the leaders of the working-class movement. Workmen's organizations are subjected to unheard-of persecutions!

Long live the working-class organizations!

Long live their independence, their revolutionary and organizing initiative!

Signed: A. N. Smirnoff, workman of the Cartridge Factory, delegate from Petrograd; N. N. Glieboff, workman at the Poutiloff Works; J. S. Leikin, delegate of the Assembly of Delegates of the Nizhni and Vladimir districts; D. V. Zakharoff, secretary of a trade union; D. I. Zakharoff, Sormovo; V. I. Matveev, Sormovo; A. A. Vezkaln, carpenter, member of the Executive Committee of the Lettish Social-Democrat Party; I. G. Volkoff, turner, member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Union of Metal Workers; A. A. Chinenkoff, Nizhni; S. P. Polikarpoff, Tula; N. K. Borisenko, Petrograd Tube Works; V. G. Chirkin, turner, member of the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions; Berg, Electrical Works; D. Smirnoff, Arsenal, Petrograd; Victor Alter, delegate of the Executive Committee of the 'Bund' (Jewish Socialist Party); Pushkin, workman of the Tula Small Arms Factory, etc., etc."

In connection with this affair, the following cable was sent by the Central Committees of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party of the "Bund" (Jewish Socialist Party) to the Executive Committees of all Socialist parties of Europe and America.

"Forty delegates, elected by workmen of various towns to a conference for the purpose of making arrangements for the convocation of a Labor Congress, have been arrested and committed for trial by the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal, created to pass death sentences without the ordinary guarantees of a fair trial. They are falsely and calumniously accused of organizing a counter-revolutionary plot. Among the arrested are the most prominent workers of the Social-Democratic Labor Movement, as, for instance, Abramovitch, member of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party and of the 'Bund,' who is personally well known to many foreign comrades; Alter, member of the Executive Committee of the 'Bund'; Smirnoff, member of last year's Soviet delegation to the Western Countries; Vezkaln, member of the Executive Committee of the Lettish Social-Democratic Party; Volkoff, chairman of the Petrograd Union of Workmen's Cooperative Societies; Zakharoff,

secretary of the Petrograd Union of Workmen of Chemical Factories; and other prominent workers of the trade union and cooperative movement.

We demand the immediate intervention of all Socialist parties to avert the shameful and criminal proceeding."

The above-given is not the only appeal of Russian workmen coming from behind the walls of a Bolshevik prison. The well-known revolutionist, Vladimir L. Bourtzev, in his paper "*Obscheye Dyelo*" (Common Cause), now printed in Paris, has published the following appeal:

"To all workmen, to all citizens:

We, twelve prisoners in the Tagansky prison in Moscow, twelve captives of the Bolshevik government, who are considered 'an extraordinary commission fighting the revolution,' we appeal to you, comrades and citizens, from behind the prison walls and bars of our solitary cells, into which we have been thrown by the Lenine government.

We, laborers and old fighters for the Revolution and participants in the proletarian movement, we prison inmates under the Tzar's regime, we socialists, are deprived of our liberty by a government of 'workmen and peasants,' a government of 'a socialist republic.'"

The appeal describes the way meetings of the peasant deputies in Moscow have been dispersed and arrests made.

"After being searched," the appeal reads, "all of us, 58 people, including 50 laborers, representatives of the proletariat of Moscow, Petrograd and Tula, were driven in automobiles to Loo-bianka,* to the well-known Extraordinary Commission. We were locked up in an ordinary cell and given nothing to eat until the next morning. During the night each of us, separately, was taken away to be questioned. Our cross-examiners were rough and ignorant people who allowed themselves to ridicule and make fun of some of the laborers and even to threaten them. Some of them asked us whether we recognized the Soviet government. They tried to detect suspected Czecho-Slovaks and seemed very much interested in their movements. At the cross-examination we were accused of nothing. The nature of the institution before which

* A street in Moscow.

we were brought for cross-examination, however, betrayed itself in the kind of questions put to some of us. We were asked whether we conducted any propaganda or tried to find comrades among the other prisoners while waiting for a hearing. (Perhaps they had suspected rebellion?) Comrades D. C. Kuchin, K. Srausky and C. G. Rogov, a mechanics' shop worker, were kept in isolation until the next morning, because of suspicion. The general atmosphere of the proceeding was that of the most corrupt espionage.

The chambers of that building in Loobianka were filled with people of most different standing and ages. There were children as well as old people who had been in seclusion for weeks without a hearing and without any accusation. Comrades and Citizens! The government commits the greatest follies. Workmen who are looking for a solution of their difficulties and for help are being subjected to the worst degradation. The government treads upon everything the people have wrung from the Revolution, upon everything that it needs as urgently as it needs air to breathe. The laborers are being deprived of their most sacred right, freedom of assembly, and thus are rendered helpless.

Our prison slips are marked: 'guilty of counter-revolutionary attempts.' The very fact that we have been arrested and our labor meeting in the socialist club has been dispersed, is proof enough of the fact that the present government falsely bears the name of 'government of workmen.' Moreover, tens of similar arrests and dispersions of labor meetings, accompanied by shootings, have taken place.

As time goes on, this government finds more and more people of the labor class, curiously enough, guilty of counter-revolutionary activities. As a result, the prisons are filled with workmen-socialists as in the times of the old regime.

The labor class is in danger! The government of the commissaries is opposed to the interests of the proletariat, the democrats, and that of the whole country. We, the twelve captives of the Bolshevik government, who are responsible workingmen-leaders of proletarian organizations and socialist parties, declare that we herewith rightfully protest against our arrest and the atrocious infringement on the laborers' rights to organize—acts

committed by the agents of the present counter-revolutionary government on June 13. We protest against the cruel procedure in dealing with the labor class, which, on the brink of the precipice, is clamoring for the rescue of Russia and the laboring classes. We hope that our voices sounding from the prison will be heard by wide circles of the labor class and democrats!

(Signed) Labor representatives: T. I. Ivanov, from the plant 'Duks,' President of the Labor Convention of June 23; V. S. Strakhin, of the factory 'Liman'; P. P. Pomakhin, of the printing establishment 'Zadrooga'; laborer from the mechanics' shop of Nesmieyanov, S. G. Rogov; laborer of the plant 'Bromley,' Y. V. Matriyev (a miller); President of the Smelters' Branch of the Professional Union of Metal Workers, deputy of the laborers from the plant of Briansk, and member of the Briansk Council of Workmen deputies, K. D. Ulyanov; secretary of the All-Russian Labor Union of printers, M. S. Kamermakher-Kefali; member of the central committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, A. R. Troyanovski; member of the Constitutional Assembly and of the central committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, G. D. Kuchin; member of the executive committee of the Moscow Soviet of Workmen's Deputies and Secretary of the Moscow committee of the Social-Democratic Party; B. V. Malkin; member of the Social-Democratic organization 'Yedinstvo' ('Unity'), A. D. Borodulin; member of the Social-Revolutionary Party, L. V. Freifeld."

2.—The Suppression of the Labor Press

The Russian workingmen and peasants and the Russian democracy in general, which fought the Tsar's regime in the name of liberty, are fighting and will fight the Bolshevik tyranny in the name of the same sacred principle. In endeavoring to fight the "bourgeoisie," the Bolshevik rulers have suppressed not only the liberal, but the entire Socialist press as well. And here is an appeal issued in Petrograd and signed by the following organizations: Committee for the Defense of Freedom of the Press; Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party; Central Committee of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists; Central Committee of the Councils of Peasant Deputies and the All-Russian Union of Typographical Workers.

"Comrades and Citizens! The wicked work of violating democratic rights becomes daily more disastrous, both for the further development of the Revolution and our freedom won by it. Civil War has inflamed the whole country. Cities are being destroyed. The war of brother against brother is consuming the strength of our revolutionary democracy. The cannon, secured to guard the conquests of our Revolution, shatter monuments, homes, and shrines of art. The cities of Russia fall at the hands of her own citizens.

"Workmen and Soldiers! The Revolution took place in order to secure and preserve the rights of the people. However, in their blind madness, the irreconcilable fanatics destroy both the achievements of the Revolution and the country. The democratic activities of the laborers are being suppressed. The nation is being driven towards ruin. The people are deprived of all liberties won by the Revolution. Those who claim to be the 'Rulers' have enough to hide. Therefore, they make you keep your mouth shut and stifle the Revolution, which clings to the ruins of destroyed cities, propitiated by the blood of murdered brothers. The press has become an illegal organ. Freedom of the press is now the privilege of only one party, i.e., the Bolsheviks. The Revolution-

ists do not have the floor. As in prerevolutionary times, we are made to believe that Russia prospers, for the people 'do not complain.'

"In these days, when only a small group of exploiters announce the approach of a socialistic state, the stifled Revolution, bled to exhaustion in the civil war, uses the last drop of its strength to proclaim 'Hail, the freedom of the press!'

"To be sure, there is no need for a truly democratic power to fear criticism and public opinion. Only those who represent the minority and are anxious to persist in power, have to have recourse to such measures as repression.

"Freedom of the press has been won by the people and for the people. The printers appeal to all proletarians and citizens to support them in their fight for freedom of the press, not because they want to protect their professional interests, but the democratic rights of the whole nation.

"During the dark days of the counter-revolution in June, the printers stood firmly for freedom of the press. During the first months of the great Russian Revolution, the efforts of the printers, in pointing out the demands of the Revolution, brought light to the dark masses. Now, when the new regime with its singular laws builds supports for a counter-revolution, we unfurl again the banner of the fight for freedom of the press. We beg and demand, and hope to be supported by all democrats."

3.—Curbing the Activities of the Trade Unions

In the Bolshevik publication, the "Northern Commune," of September 13, 1918, we find the following decree regulating the right of public associations and meetings:

"(1) All societies, unions and associations—political, economic, artistic, religious, etc.—formed on the territory of the Union of the Commune of the Northern Region must be registered at the corresponding Soviets or Committees of the Village Poor.

"(2) The constitution of the union or society, a list of founders and members of the committee, with names and addresses, and a list of all members, with their names and addresses, must be submitted at registration.

"(3) All books, minutes, etc., must always be kept at the disposal of representatives of the Soviet power for the purpose of revision.

"(4) Three days' notice must be given to the Soviet, or to the Committee of the Village Poor, of all public and private meetings.

"(5) All meetings must be open to the representatives of the Soviet power, viz., the representatives of the Central and District Soviet, the Committee of the Poor, and the Kommandatur of the Revolutionary Secret Police Force.

"(6) Unions and societies which do not comply with those regulations will be regarded as counter-revolutionary organizations and prosecuted."

The first document shows that even those publications the tendencies of which meet with the approval of the Bolshevik leaders, are permitted to exist only until the requirements of the population "are adequately met by the Soviet publications." As a result there are now only Bolshevik publications in existence in Soviet Russia. The second document, signed by the notorious Zinoviev, is of special interest because its contents and even its style bring to mind the decrees of the days of the Tzar.

4.—The So-Called “Dictatorship of the Proletariat”

The organ of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, “Rabochy International” (The Workmen’s International), of August 7, contains an interesting resolution passed by the Executive and Petrograd Committees of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party in July 27, 1918. The following are some extracts from it:

“The imaginary dictatorship of the proletariat has definitely turned into the dictatorship of the Bolshevik Party, which attracts all sorts of adventurers and suspicious characters and is supported only by the naked force of hired bayonets. Their sham Socialism has resulted in the complete destruction of Russia’s industry, in the country’s enslavement to foreign capital, in the destruction of all class organizations of the proletariat, in the suppression of all democratic liberty and of all organs of democratic State life, thus preparing the ground for a bourgeois counter-revolution of the worst and most brutal kind.

“The Bolsheviks are unable to solve the food problem, and their attempt to bribe the proletariat by organizing expeditions into the villages, in order to seize supplies of bread, drives the peasantry into the arms of the counter-revolution and threatens to rouse its hatred towards the town in general, and the proletariat in particular, for a long time to come.

“In continuing the struggle against the Bolshevik tyranny which dishonors the Russian Revolution, Social-Democracy pursues the following aims: (1) To make it impossible for the working class to have to shed its blood for the sake of maintaining the sham dictatorship of the toiling masses or of the sham Socialist order, both of which are bound to perish and are meanwhile killing the soul and body of the proletariat; (2) To organize the working class into a force which, in union with other democratic forces of the country, will be able to throw off the yoke of the Bolshevik regime, to defend the democratic conquests of the Revolution and to oppose any reactionary force which would attempt to hang a millstone around the neck of the Russian democracy.”

5.—The Socialists-Revolutionists of the Left Against the Bolsheviks

The well-known Russian revolutionist, Vladimir Bourtzev, in his paper "Obscheye Dyelo," published in Paris, in the issue of April 30th, 1919, quotes the following proclamation issued by the Petrograd Committee of the Socialists-Revolutionists of the Left, who, until the Brest-Litovsk Treason, supported the Bolsheviks. The proclamation was issued, in the middle of March, 1919:

"Shame to the Bolshevik Violators, Liars, and 'Agents Provocateurs!'

"The Petrograd Soviet does not express the will of the Workmen, Sailors, and 'Reds.'

"The Soviet was not elected. The elections were either pretenses, or held under threats of shooting or starvation. This terrorism completely suffocated freedom of speech, the press, and meetings of the laboring classes.

"The Petrograd Soviet consists of self-appointed Bolsheviks. It is a blind tool in the hands of the 'agents-provocateurs,' hangmen and assassins of the Bolshevik regime. Let this fraudulent Soviet before the laboring classes of Russia and the whole world, without reserve or excuses, honorably answer the following questions:

"'Where is the dictatorship of the proletariat and working peasantry? It has been supplanted by the dictatorship of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, governing with the assistance of a swarm of extraordinary commissions and punitive detachments of imported soldiers.

"'What has become of the authority of the Soviets? There is no authority now in Soviet Russia.

"'Where are the promised rights of the electors? At the factories and the mills, on the ships and on the railways, sit self-appointed Bolshevik commissaries (all until recently members of the Black Hundreds), crucifying the workmen and the peasants at their own sweet will. The Revolutionary Government of the masses has been seized by the Bolshevik agents.

“‘What has become of freedom of speech and of the press, particularly the press of the peasants, soldiers and sailors?’

“‘The laboring classes are not allowed to congregate. They are not permitted to publish their own newspapers, and they may not utter a word against the Bolsheviks under penalty of being arrested and shot.

“‘Where is the promised workmen’s control over the factories and mills? It has been replaced by self-elected Bolsheviks’ agents; the Government is afraid to trust the workingmen. It has tied them down to their work and has established a new form of servile labor.

“‘Where is the promised socialization of the land?’

“‘What has become of the pledge to abolish the death penalty? It is now in full force, at the front and at the rear, not for the bourgeoisie, but for the poor.

“‘The Bolshevik party, in their struggle with the workmen and the peasants, are supported by the hired bayonets of **Letts** and Chinamen, under the traitorous leadership of certain Russian officers who are now better off under Lenine than under the Tzarist regime.

“‘Comrades—At the present moment, of all the wonderful edifice of freedom inaugurated by the November revolution, there remains not a single stone, only lying words and tyranny.’”

6.—Russia as Seen by a British Trade Unionist

A picture of conditions in Russia, by an English working-man who was in Russia from the time of the outbreak of the Revolution until last January, is given in the Westminster Gazette in an interview, entitled "The Truth About Russia." The article was cabled to the Philadelphia Public Ledger and is reprinted herewith by special permission. The Westminster Gazette says:

"There has lately arrived in England a witness of the internal condition of Russia. This is H. V. Keeling, who alone probably of all Englishmen has seen the Bolshevik movement from within and can report of his own knowledge what the Russian working class thinks.

"Mr. Keeling went to Russia five years ago to teach the workmen of a Russian firm which had acquired British patents of certain new processes of the lithographic and printing trades. For twenty years previously he had been a member of the British Trade Union. He was admitted to membership in the Russian Printing Trade Union and thus spent all his time as a workman among workmen.

"In 1918 he went about the country opening workshops for repairing all sorts of things. In this way he made himself so useful, not to say indispensable, that the Soviets insisted on his remaining in the country. In October last he was appointed to the position of Chief Photographer of the Committee on Public Education, presided over by Lunacharsky, whom he describes as an amiable visionary with his eyes shut to the realities of the Bolshevik regime. How Keeling finally got out of Russia and the extraordinary adventures and hairbreadth escapes he had at the frontier of Finland cannot be told yet. The main fact is that he was in Russia for the whole period of the Revolution until January 9 this year. Mr. Keeling speaks with singular impartiality of what he has seen and heard.

"Mr. Keeling says: 'The population was originally divided

by the Bolsheviki into four categories which exactly turn upside down the social classes of other countries. These are first, manual laborers; second, clerical workers, provided they employ nobody; third, everybody who has employed anybody from a small householder employing one servant to a manufacturer employing a thousand hands; fourth, all former idle rich, princes, aristocrats, landowners and courtiers of every description.

“The penalty for failing to please the Bolsheviki is to be degraded from the class in which you get some food to the class in which you get scarcely any. In the last few months there has not been anything like enough for the first class and scarcely anything for the others. Class IV, the former rich, I should say, has disappeared. They have either got out of the country or been starved to death or shot or have turned themselves into workmen in order to get food.

“I cannot tell you more, for nobody knows. Other classes are those that get some food and those that get hardly any officially. To get food you must be in with the Bolsheviks, and then they put you into the first class. It is very difficult to get there and very easy to get out. They degrade you for slight reasons which you cannot discover and then you starve. Whole trade unions have been degraded because they opposed the Bolsheviki or offended them somehow.

“One has cards and coupons, but all private trading is forbidden and nearly all the shops in Petrograd are shut. There are a few hundred municipal shops, and you are supposed to receive half a pound of bread a day. Potatoes, butter, meat and sugar are fixed at reasonable prices; but as a matter of fact for a long time past nothing has been sold but bread, and even that failed for seven days in December.

“I have been six days without bread, three days without anything to eat except the so-called public dinner, which consisted of watery soup, a small piece of salt fish and one-eighth of a pound of bread. Sometimes they offered me oats, as if I were a horse, when there was no bread. All children are in the first-class, for the Bolshevik idea is that all children should be charges of the State while their parents go to work, but the children are starving in great numbers.

“If you are not in the first class or are degraded from it you have to prowl about and try to get food secretly; but this is a punishable offense, for which sometimes people may even be shot. People go to the country, taking anything they think the peasants will take in exchange for food and get a bag of flour or a few potatoes. But it is illegal to go out of town without a permit or to try anything when you get there, so the Red Guards stop them and search them as they come back, and if they find anything confiscate it and often arrest the people and carry them off.

“I saw a woman who had gone to the country and got thirty pounds of flour from her own native place for her children, who were starving. She was seized by the Guards at the station when she was trying to get back, and they took it from her, although she fell on her knees and implored them with sobs to let her keep only a few pounds.

“Then when she found it was no use she threw herself under a train and was killed.

“It makes it worse that you have quantities of money in your pocket but can buy nothing. I have had rubles worth £600 (\$3,000) in my pocket and have not been able to buy a piece of bread. You don't trouble about money. You pay 5 shilling (\$1.25) for a lump of sugar if you can get it. A workman's wages are £100 (\$500) a month at the old value, but though he can still buy a watch for £5 (\$25) he cannot buy a loaf of bread for £50 (\$250). People who have food will not sell it for rubles because they are worth nothing and there is nothing to buy with them, so the Bolsheviki cannot get food though they are trying to and having fights with the peasants in consequence.

“I believe myself there is enough food in Russia to keep everyone alive, for the last harvest was good, but it cannot be got and it is all being hoarded and concealed.

“Nine-tenths of the people who keep in with the Bolsheviki have to pretend to like them and would do anything to get rid of them if they knew how, but you have to remember the Bolsheviki are clever, feeding the people who are likely to fight. Every man who joins the Red Army is sure of his own food, also

gets food for his wife and children. The army is fed before anyone else and out of all proportion to the other classes. Even workmen get nothing until the army has had enough, so large numbers of men join the army for the sake of getting food and then have to keep at it for fear of losing their food. Besides if they try any tricks they not only are punished and shot themselves, but their wives, families and parents are starved.

"A man will stand almost anything rather than see his wife, children and parents starved to death, and the use they make of this kind of coercion is devilish. Soldiers have to be careful, for there are lots of spies among them. Then besides the regular Red Army there is a special picked army, which gets everything it wants, food or anything else, and all these men know if they don't fight they will starve, so they fight to save their own food and to prevent their wives and children from starving. That is their way of keeping alive.'

"How can men at the top, Lenine, Trotsky and the rest,—Lenine at all events is supposed to have some intelligence and humanity—sit there and let this go on? Are they devils or maniacs?" Keeling was asked.

"I suppose you would say they are quite sane according to our notions, but as things are they cannot help themselves and could not stop it if they chose. They have made monstrous areas helpless. Bolshevism is, in fact, become a vested interest for its privileged class, and Lenine and Trotsky are obliged to go on feeding a few, starving the many and shooting objectors."

Asked how men could be found who would go on day after day administering this diabolical system with this spectacle of helpless misery under their eyes, Mr. Keeling said:

"Most of them are quite young, some notorious bad characters, many mere boys whom we should call hooligans. One boy of 17 I knew was a commissary with the power of life and death over forty villages. He goes about with a pistol, and one day thrust it in my face, threatening to shoot me on the spot. I knew how to deal with him, but the Russian peasants do not. As seen, such lads are terrorizing whole districts."

Keeling admits frankly that he was attracted by the Bolshevik idea, and hoped at one time it might be good for Russia if

not for the world in general. He was asked what has happened to the Russian people.

"Is Bolshevism as black as it is painted, and if it is, how can the whole nation submit to it?" He said in answer: "The Russian people are starving, and when you are starving you do not think about other atrocities: you think about nothing except just food to keep yourself alive. You do not trouble much whether you are going to be shot yourself or whether other people are being shot. You are collecting food like an animal. I left Russia six weeks ago, but even now I cannot get over the habit of thinking about my food, and every day I find myself wondering where the next meal is to come from."

Keeling expanded on this idea. "And on the one side millions of people too absorbed with the ravening thought how to get food for themselves, their wives and children to think of anything beyond the movement, too exhausted to resist; on the other hand, a favored few relatively well-fed persons prepared for any violence or cruelty to save themselves from losing their privilege and slipping into the vortex of famine. For, whatever may be in the original idea of Bolshevism," as Keeling explained, "it is simply that it confers upon some and denies to others the privilege of eating, and that all its other deeds of violence and cruelty are as nothing to the supreme cruelty of withholding food." Keeling went on to explain the system, describing it without color or emotion, as if living in that world he had come to take its horrors for granted.

"The peasants have got rid of their landlords and sat down and divided the land," continued Keeling. "They have quarreled a good deal, but on the whole did it sensibly, each taking a bit of the best land, then another bit of worse, and so on. But, while there was plenty of land for one village, there was nothing like enough in another, so the distribution was very unequal and there was great discontent. Instead of having the splendid time they hoped for, they find there is nothing to buy and they are always being worried and threatened by the Bolsheviki. They have no tea, no vodka, no tobacco; they feel the loss of tobacco especially, and

seem to walk about in a dazed condition, like men used to drugs, who had suddenly to go without. Peasants have implored me to give them tobacco.

"Peasants work only just as much as they must to keep themselves alive. The next harvest is likely to be very bad and then famine, which now exists in the towns, will begin to spread over the country, and one dare not think what will happen then.

"My own belief is they, Lenine and Trotzky, know the game is up, but do not know how to get out of it or what to do. The slightest sign of weakening and they are done. So they simply go ahead, grinding out everybody they think dangerous. Even the advanced Socialists are beginning to speak of Czardom as the good old times.

"It is terrible to live in Russia these times. As you walk in Petrograd you never see anyone laugh or smile; men and women are like shadows; little children are so wasted they seem to be all eyes. All the time people are disappearing; nobody knows what becomes of them. Five years ago Petrograd had a population of 2,400,000; now there are scarcely 700,000.

"I have no personal animosity against the Bolsheviki. They treated me as well as they could, but I am a working man, a trade unionist, and I don't like to hear British working men talking as if Bolshevism was a great and splendid experiment to be copied by other countries, or as if they were helping the working people of Russia by saying no to all proposals now before the Allies for dealing with it. I want to convince them it is not a question of politics or theory, but just a question of humanity on which we have got to do our duty and help. There is enormous suffering and misery which we ought to stop if we can.

"I want to say also that it won't do the Socialists any good to mix up with the Bolsheviki and make people think that if Socialism is tried it must end in wholesale murder and starving millions of people to death, but that is what will happen if the working people confuse Socialism with Bolshevism and suppose that Socialism must support the Bolsheviki."

7.—An Appeal to the American People

The following appeal to the American people has been published in the American press, signed, among others, by Nicholas Tchaikovsky, the President of the Archangel Government and the leader of the Party of People's Socialists; Vladimir I. Lebedev, former Secretary of the Navy in the Russian Provisional Government, a member of the Constituent Assembly and a prominent member of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists, and Alexander Titov, one of the leaders of the Party of the People's Socialists and a representative of the All-Russian League of Municipalities and Zemstvos; Vladimir Bourtzev, and Boris Savenkov:

"All the elements of our country which are striving for a new, free and democratic Russia are united in the struggle against the common enemy of freedom, democracy and culture. In the name of the holy war against barbarism and in the name of the regeneration of our country we appeal to the great democracy of the New World. Our first need is the moral support of the American democracy, which cannot approve of the numberless unspeakable crimes against the Russian people which have been and are now being committed by the Bolshevik despotism.

"We rely on the support of the American people in our struggle for self-government, which, as the history of our country and every country shows, can be obtained only through a constituent assembly elected by universal, equal suffrage. We rely also on your practical help in the shape of food, arms and munitions, which you so largely furnished to the Entente before your entrance into the war.

"We have to equip and arm volunteer armies. We must care for the sick and wounded, and we ask you to send us medical supplies and Red Cross materials. We have to restore our economic life, which has practically ceased in territories occupied by the Bolsheviki and the Huns. The reports of the Bolshe-

vikis' finance ministers show that the number of cars and locomotives—woefully deficient at the beginning of the Bolshevik tyranny—has been reduced by a little more than half under their deadly and devastating rule.

“The Russian peasants not only have been systematically robbed of their grain by expeditions of the Red Guards, but are without tools or agricultural implements. We rely on America for locomotives, cars, agricultural machinery and technical supplies.

“Above all we rely on the American democracy to aid the million Russian prisoners still starved and worked to death in Germany. If they are returned to Russia they will be slaughtered on the frontier or forced under the guns of Chinese and Lettish mercenaries to enter the Red Army and fight against the Russian people. Consider the disgrace to all civilized mankind if this alternative is left to those who fought in the common cause of world peace.

“The first political success of the Bolsheviks was the dissolution of our first and only democratically elected Constituent Assembly, which for fifty years has been the goal of all Russians—even of the Bolsheviks up to the moment when they found it overwhelmingly against them. Then they invented a new double name for their antidemocratic government: Soviets, or dictatorship of the proletariat. Next they dissolved all the democratic Municipal Councils and Zemstvos and proceeded to take away all other liberties won by the great march of the Revolution: freedom of the press, free speech and the right of assemblage. All political parties, including the Socialist, which opposed minority rule, were then outlawed and their leading members killed, imprisoned or driven into exile.

“This dictatorship led rapidly to an almost complete stoppage of industry. Yet governmental expenditures increased with the growing pauperization of the people. This is due to three causes: first, the growing staff of utterly incompetent Bolshevik officials; second, the growing army of mercenaries to keep down the ever-spreading insurrections; and, third, the enormous subsidies paid to Bolshevik workingmen regardless of the fact that

the factories are producing sometimes little and sometimes nothing.

"Finally, the scheme of extending Lenine's paradise to the whole world by force of arms—which, it is repeatedly proclaimed, gives the only hope of Bolshevism's continued existence—necessitates other monstrous expenditures by his bankrupt government. Political and economic slavery, moral corruption and starvation of millions of people, will be the results of this monstrous chaos and misrule. This new Tzarism, like the old, can be stopped only by deeds. We are doing our part. Every democrat in Russia is ready and willing to die for the cause. But we are utterly helpless without your aid.

"People of America, we appeal to you not as beggars, but as brothers. Democratic Russia will repay every cent she borrows in this time of sorrow and horror. We are not ashamed to stretch out our hand under these conditions, and we confidently expect to get not a stone, but bread. Russia must be liberated or there will be no world peace. Russia must be effectively helped or the League of Nations will fail. The United States of America must help to create a United States of Russia to link the whole world in a chain of free, democratic nations."

8.—What the Russian Democracy is Fighting For

The united democratic and labor forces of Russia that are fighting the Bolsheviks have adopted the following working program for the regeneration of Russia. This program was formulated by Katherine Breshkovsky, the "grandmother of the Russian Revolution," and has received the unqualified support of all the truly democratic and revolutionary elements of Russia:

"(1) The reestablishment of all civil liberties; (a) freedom of speech, (b) of the press, (c) of assembly, (d) of association, (e) inviolability of person, residence and mail, (f) freedom of religion,—on the basis of the temporary laws passed by the Russian Provisional Government.

"(2) The reestablishment of municipal and rural (Zemstvo) self-government on the basis of the laws passed by the Russian Provisional Government.

"(3) The summoning in the briefest possible time of an All-Russian Constituent Assembly on the basis of the election law promulgated by the Provisional Government.

"(4) The proclamation of Russia as a democratic, federated Republic.

"(5) The resumption of the work of the Committees assigned to prepare the plans for the organization of regional Dumas (Siberia, Ural, Northern Provinces, Southern Provinces, etc.), and the renewal of the functioning of the Regional Governments.

"(6) The recognition of the transition of the land to the toiling masses, pending the final solution of the land problem by the Constituent Assembly, and the transfer of the administration of agrarian affairs to the proper Zemstvo institutions.

"(7) The recognition of the nationalization of forests, waters and the substrata of the soil, pending action by the Constituent Assembly.

"(8) The State control of industry in cooperation with the Zemstvos and workers' organizations.

"(9) Decisive encouragement and help to Cooperatives and to the Zemstvos by the Government. The immediate organization of trade and industry.

"(10) Autonomy for nationalities in Russia on the basis of the laws passed by the Russian Provisional Government.

"(11) The recognition of the separation of Church from State.

"(12) The organization of an effective Army on the basis of the soldier's retention of his rights as a man and a citizen.

"(13) The declaration as null and void of all the decrees of the Bolsheviki, with the adoption of a policy of gradual transition from conditions under their regime to the newly moulded forms, on the basis of temporary regulations to be ordained either by the future Provisional Government or by the Constituent Assembly.

"(14) Immediate amnesty to all political prisoners, if their offenses have no taint of criminality.

"The time for despotism and the suppression of the ideas and strivings of the people towards a decent human life is gone forever. We cannot save Russia without sincere service to the ideals of freedom. We are prepared to give her all freely, unhesitatingly and without fear of sacrifice."

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